



Ivano-Frankivsk Church of Christ Update – February 2024

Hello there!

The month of February has been a month of construction in many ways in Ivano-Frankivsk. First, we have been working on *spiritual* construction in the church by going back to the basics. Our Sunday discussions in worship have revolved around the foundation of the church: Jesus as the head, why he is worthy of worship, and how the first church acted in response to God's glory. Our goal in this has been to re-orient the members on what the church is meant to be as the kingdom as well as give some simple lessons that we can share with friends about the church of Christ. On Wednesdays, Perry has been leading us in a study that overviews the entire Bible and the major themes, again to lay a solid foundation for more to come.

Second, we have been focused on *community* construction. Perry, Inna, and I have all visited several local contacts and officials that have been familiar with the church of Christ to reintroduce ourselves and let them know that we are here with the intention of helping the community as much as we can! We have the ability in the church here to meet many physical needs, with the goal of eventually meeting spiritual needs of the local people as well. That begins with making these connections and offering ourselves as a resource for anything they might need.



Third, we have picked back up on *physical* construction in the church building! We were able to purchase several needed items for the kitchen and two bedrooms thanks to the donations of some wonderful members. As soon as the items were available, Pasha got to work and has been doing a masterful job making sure everything is up to code and being completed as quickly as he can. Our hope is to finish out these rooms as much as possible and then begin searching for the cabinets and for the kitchen!



It is amazing how quickly a month can fly by without noticing. As we begin to push into March, Perry will head home and we will all miss his presence dearly. He has been a great asset here the last two months and is a wonderful example for the people here. As for me, my focus in March will be to establish new connections with people who might be interested in hearing more about the church. I have reached out to some who can help get me in front of groups and individuals who want opportunities to speak English, which will give us an opportunity to discuss what the church is and why we are here. Hopefully, this can produce some further Bible studies!



There are still several things that we need to sort out in this transitional period and we still need to earn the trust of the church members here – they know us from our trips, but it is a different level to work with a group full time. We are also focused on working through the church budget and retooling it to make sure the Lord's money is being used as efficiently as possible. Please continue to pray for the church here to grow both spiritually and numerically as we work on building God's kingdom in Ukraine!

– Gif

From Perry Baker

As the month is ending there have been some snags but also many positive things that have happened.

- Ivan has encouraged the congregation to be unified and help after he leaves. All the men we have asked to serve in various capacities such as leading singing, prayers, opening and closing the service, Lord's supper, have been very willing.
- We also had a wonderful supper visit with Oleg and his family and discussed briefly about Jared and Whitney coming to teach at the school and he was excited and Gif and him will make concrete plans in March.
- It's exciting to see the work Pasha is doing in the kitchen and remaining two rooms downstairs! Once we bought the material he requested (with the exception of the cupboards) he began working very diligently with perfection and is the happiest we have seen him!
- The church attendance it remains constant on Sunday with 22 and that's with some sick and in the hospital. We have 5 to 6 families watching on line and that includes those in Zelena. Gif and I are doing a series about the Kingdom, God's Love, His Son's purpose, the importance of evangelizing and growing a strong church.
- We also had good visits with Anatoly the mayor of Lysets and Andrew the mayor of Yaremche and Gif assured them both that our long-lasting friendship will continue and we will do whatever we can to help their communities.
- I also cannot express enough gratitude, appreciation, and how valuable Inna to the work. Not just as an interpreter but friend and Christian sister. Without her it would be impossible to accomplish the things that has to be done. She has the most cheerful spirit.
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It is a great privilege to work with such a wonderful, caring and loving brother in Christ. Gif thank you so much for putting up with me and Lord willing and with the elders blessings. I cannot wait to work with you in the future.

– Perry

February 27, 2024

